

REMARKS

Applicant's representative would like to thank Examiner Vu for the courtesies extended during a telephonic interview on April 6, 2005. During the interview, Applicant's representative presented arguments to the Examiner that Ryan (U.S. Pat. No. 5,788,330), Robinson (U.S. Pat. No. 5,813,725), and Hammoud (U.S. Pat. No. 5,558,403), individually and collectively, fail to teach each and every element of the claimed invention.

Robinson fails to teach a drive shaft operable to move along a slot to move a sliding pin from a locking position without moving an arm relative to a support. Robinson teaches a pin (58) that is fixedly attached to a pair of plates (18, 38) and slidably received by a slot (64) of an arm (20). See Robinson at FIGS. 2-4. The pin (58) only traverses the slot (64) when the arm (20) is rotated relative to the pin (58). See Robinson at Col. 3, Ins. 64-67, Col. 4, Ins. 1-5, and FIGS. 2-4. Therefore, Robinson fails to teach a sliding pin movable between a locked position and an unlocked position without moving an arm relative to a support. During the interview, the Examiner agreed to withdraw the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) pertaining to Robinson.

The Hammoud reference similarly fails to teach a drive shaft operable to move a sliding pin from a locking position without moving an arm relative to a support. Hammoud teaches a rigid member (56) that is formed as part of a seatback (20). See Hammoud at Col. 5, Ins. 8-13. The rigid member (56) is slidably received within a slot (58) formed in plates (44) of an arm (42). See Hammoud at FIG. 2. In this manner, the rigid member (56) is attached to the seatback (20) and cannot be moved without

rotating the seatback (20). Therefore, Hammoud fails to teach moving a sliding pin without moving an arm relative to a support. During the interview, the Examiner agreed to withdraw the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) pertaining to Hammoud.

Regarding the Ryan reference, Applicant's representative reiterated arguments presented to the Examiner during a teleconference of October 13, 2004. Specifically, Ryan fails to teach a drive pin (120) that is "operable to prevent" movement of an arm (20) relative to a support (18). Ryan teaches that movement of the arm (20) relative to the support (18) is governed by the rotational position of a pawl (32) about a pivot (34). See Ryan at Col. 4, Ins. 23-28 and FIGS. 2 and 3.

The slide pin (120) of Ryan is slidably received by a slot (122) of a memory pawl (82) and by a lost-motion slot (124) in a second connector link (126). See Ryan at Col. 7, Ins. 36-41 and FIG. 1. Interaction between the pin (120) and slots (122, 124) rotates the memory pawl (82) into a cammed position and pulls the second connector link (126) rearwardly to eventually releases the pawl (32) via rotation of cam (44). See Ryan at Col. 7, Ins. 45-60. In this manner, Ryan fails to teach a sliding pin operable to prevent rotation of an arm relative to a support as the slide pin (120) of Ryan simply traverses slots (122, 124) to selectively rotate the memory pawl (82) and pull the second connector link (126), respectively. The Examiner was receptive to this argument, and even agreed with Applicant's representative during the October teleconference, but required further review of the Ryan reference prior to allowing claims. Upon further review, the Examiner issued the January 7, 2005 Office Action.

Claims 36-56 are now pending in the application. The following remarks are believed to be fully responsive to the outstanding Office Action and are believed to

place the application in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the remarks contained herein.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 36-40, 43-44 and 47-56 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Ryan (U.S. Patent No. 5,788,330).

Claims 36-40, 43-44 and 47-56 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Robinson (U.S. Patent No. 5,813,725).

Claims 36-40, 43-44 and 47-56 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Hammoud et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,558,403).

These are rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections pertaining to the Robinson and Hammoud references are moot in light of the remarks above. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Independent Claims 36 and 52 each call for a seat hinge assembly having a slide pin operable to prevent movement of an arm relative to a support while independent Claim 44 calls for a hinge assembly having a slide pin that is operable to selectively prevent rotation of an arm relative to a support. Ryan fails to teach such a relationship.

Ryan teaches slide pin (120) that is slidably received by a slot (122) of a memory pawl (82) and by a lost-motion slot (124) in a second connector link (126). See Ryan at Col. 7, Ins. 36-41 and FIG. 1. Interaction between the pin (120) and slots (122, 124) rotates the memory pawl (82) into a cammed position and pulls the second connector link (126) rearwardly to eventually releases the pawl (32) via rotation of cam (44). See

Ryan at Col. 7, Ins. 45-60. In this manner, Ryan fails to teach a sliding pin operable to prevent rotation of an arm relative to a support as the slide pin (120) of Ryan simply traverses slots (122, 124) to selectively rotate the memory pawl (82) and pull the second connector link (126), respectively.

Because Ryan fails to teach a sliding pin operable to prevent rotation of an arm relative to a support, Applicants respectfully submit that Ryan fails to teach each and every element of the present invention. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent Claims 36, 44, and 52, as well as Claims 37-43, 45-51, and 53-56, respectively dependent therefrom, are in condition for allowance. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

The Examiner states that Claims 41-42 and 45-46 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants have not amended the Claims to include the allowable subject matter as Claims 36-56 are believed to be in condition for allowance in light of the foregoing remarks.


CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt

and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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